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Capitalizing a future unsustainable: global energy and the fate of market civilization

Timothy DiMuzio

University of Wollongong, tdimuzio@uow.edu.au

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Capitalizing a future unsustainable: global energy and the fate of market civilization

Abstract

Liberal capitalist polities are being held up as the ultimate civilizational achievement precisely at a point in time when the energy intensive built environments & rampant & senseless consumerism of these societies are threatened by ecological devastation & the coming end of cheap & abundant fuel. Throughout the twentieth century this pattern of high energy consumption social reproduction was largely shaped by the global energy industry & the industries it spawned and/or allowed to flourish. Yet due to a number of foreseeable, if not entirely predictable, future obstacles & challenges, this blueprint of development seems doomed to failure. However, despite some recognition of these challenges & the recent worldwide collapse in capitalization, it appears as though investors are continuing to capitalize this unsustainable future. In this paper I use a power theory of value approach to critically assess how far & in what ways the global energy industry is continuing to shape & reshape the terrain of social reproduction & governance towards an unsustainable future. In the first section of this paper I historicize the emergence of a more fully globalized market civilization by putting it in the context of the discovery of fossil fuel energy & how this resource has been integral to the “modernization” project of the twentieth century. In the ensuing sections, I outline the power theory of value of Nitzan & Bichler and argue that this perspective can help us account for the rise of a petro-market civilization. This sets the stage for a final section which offers an analysis of the oil & gas industry vis à vis the alternative energy sector of the global economy.

Keywords

unsustainable, global, capitalizing, energy, future, fate, market, civilization

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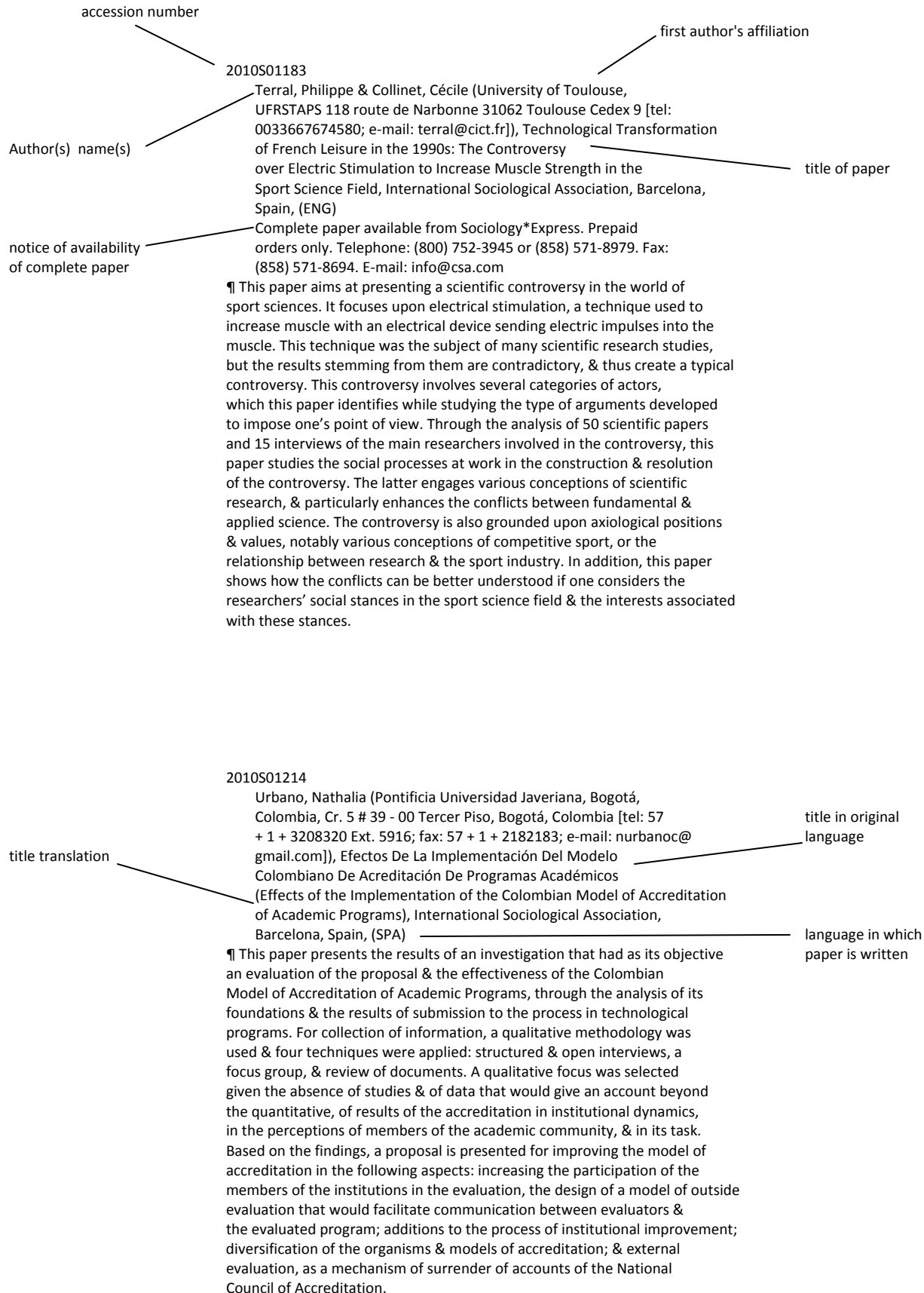
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¶ To be “dissident”, a “protestor” or at least “alternate”, proves to be the necessary element for a biography which gives right to an intellectual life in the “post socialists” countries after 1989. If positioning during the communist period does not offer a referent objectifying a “clean” biography, the autobiographical write-up can, on the other hand, create a trajectory of implicit dissidence. Is it necessary to choose the criticism of such an approach which aims to adjust in a universalizing ethnical frame and to rid from the guilt of the past; or, rather, to opt for the understanding of the rewritings accounting for the tensions between the individual constraints & choices transcending the context? We will propose an analysis of the autobiography of Lubomir Levčev, representative of the artistic-creative intelligentsia, having occupied posts of senior officials in the intellectual and the political field in Bulgaria, before 1989. His autobiographical write-up, “You are the next one” with a subtitle “Novel of memories”, creates a character who lives inside the system and apart from it, a narrative posture of obliteration of the stigma.

2010S00660

Dimmock, Alexandra K. & Burchell, Brendan J. (Department of Sociology, University of Bristol, 12 Woodland Road Bristol, Bristol BS8 1UQ [tel: +44 151 336 2143; e-mail: soakd@bristol.ac.uk]), **From Breadwinning to Babysitting: An Exploratory Study of Stay-At-Home Fathers' Experiences**, *International Sociological Association, Gothenburg, Sweden*,

¶ This paper explores the lives, decision making processes and experiences of twenty-six full-time stay-at-home fathers. The men were contacted online, for instance through social networking sites, & the data collection was mainly via emails & online “chats”. They discussed masculinity & gender roles in terms that they defined themselves, whilst aware of gender norms and common stereotypes. They reported that reactions from others were mixed, often with emotional & practical support coming primarily from immediate & extended family members. Fathers acknowledge stigma toward their roles, but reported being generally unaffected by the attitudes & reactions of others. The internet as a source of advice & information from other stay-at-home fathers is central to understanding the social support available to this emerging family type that challenges norms in both public and private spheres. The men discuss a range of influences that guided them to the role of becoming full-time primary carers; their own previous careers, their partner's earnings capacity and satisfaction with their jobs, & their beliefs about the importance of parents in child-rearing were all preeminent in their discourses. This study is rooted in a burgeoning body of scholarship including maternal gatekeeping, “doing gender” and identities, ideologies & discourses on fatherhood.

2010S00661

DiMuzio, Tim (Center for Excellence in Global Governance Research, University of Helsinki, 3 Yliopistonkatu PL 4 Helsinki, 00014 Finland [tel: 358 0465726386; e-mail: timothy.dimuzio@helsinki.fi]), **Capitalizing a Future Unsustainable: Global Energy and the Fate of Market Civilization**, *International Sociological Association, Gothenburg, Sweden*,

¶ Liberal capitalist polities are being held up as the ultimate civilizational achievement precisely at a point in time when the energy intensive built environments & rampant & senseless consumerism of these societies are threatened by ecological devastation & the coming end of cheap & abundant fuel. Throughout the twentieth century this pattern of high energy consumption social reproduction was largely shaped by the global energy industry & the industries it spawned and/or allowed to flourish. Yet due to a number of foreseeable, if not entirely predictable, future obstacles & challenges, this blueprint of development seems doomed to failure. However, despite some recognition of these challenges & the recent worldwide collapse in capitalization, it appears as though investors are continuing to capitalize this unsustainable future. In this paper I use a power theory of value approach to critically assess how far & in what ways the global energy industry is continuing to shape & reshape the terrain of social reproduction & governance towards an unsustainable future. In the first section of this paper I historicize the emergence of a more fully globalized market civilization by putting it in the context of the discovery of fossil fuel energy & how this resource has been integral to the “modernization” project of the twentieth century. In the ensuing sections, I outline the power theory of value of Nitzan & Bichler and argue that this perspective can help us account for the rise of a petro-market civilization. This sets the stage for a final section which offers an analysis of the oil & gas industry vis à vis the alternative energy sector of the global economy.

2010S00662

Diniz, Adriana V. S. (Departamento de Sociología y Antropología

Social/Universidad de Valencia, Facultat de Ciències Socials, Universitat de València, 46022 - València (España) [tel: +34 96.382.84.54; fax: +34 96.382.84.50; e-mail: adrianavsdiniz@hotmail.com]), **Transiciones Biográficas Formativas y Profesionales de Sujetos Adultos en España y en Brasil**, (Educational and Professional Biographical Transitions in Adults in Spain and Brazil), *International Sociological Association, Gothenburg, Sweden, (SPA)*

¶ Las transformaciones en el mundo del trabajo, de la educación y formación, en el marco del concepto de lifelong learning, parecen atrincherar al sujeto adulto, y le exigen plantearse un conjunto de dilemas respecto a cómo relacionarse con lo educativo-formativo en esta etapa de la vida. Desde la perspectiva biográfica, nos ha interesado comprender de qué forma los adultos, en España y en Brasil, se relacionan con los dispositivos institucionales educativo-formativos disponibles y cómo éstos impactan y/o han impactado en las biografías de aprendizaje para y en el trabajo. La investigación se ha anclado en los estudios sobre transiciones (Casal y Cardenal) y en la teoría de la biograficidad (Alheit y Dausien). Han sido realizadas cincuenta y uno entrevistas narrativas. Los resultados apuntan que el proceso de construcción de las biografías de aprendizaje, en las diferentes fases de la vida adulta (joven adultez, adultez y adultez mayor), no son homogéneas, sino diversas y marcadas por desigualdades; influenciadas no solamente por la oferta pública educativa-formativa, sino que depende también de las decisiones del propio adulto, como sujeto reflexivo, en el proceso de enfrentamiento de dilemas en la (re)vinculación a lo educativo-formativo, desde las condiciones espaciales y sociales en las que está inserto, y desde las expectativas, los valores y los horizontes del mundo de la vida. Sistematizamos zonas de dilemas enfrentados e identificamos modos de transiciones formativo-profesionales. Sugerimos pautas para las políticas públicas dirigidas a ampliar los modos de gestión biográfica de aprendizaje de personas adultas en las transiciones formativo-profesionales.

2010S00663

Dinwiddie, Gniesha Y. (University of Maryland College Park, 2169 LeFrak Hall College Park, MD 20742 [tel: 3014058938; e-mail: gdinwiddie@aasp.umd.edu]), **Does Stress “Get Under the Skin” Differently by Race/Ethnicity? Understanding Social Inequalities in Cardiovascular Risk in Adulthood**, *International Sociological Association, Gothenburg, Sweden*,

¶ Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) is the major cause of death in the United States & racial/ethnic minorities have higher incidence and prevalence rates compared to other groups in the population. Although studies have documented population differences in CVD, the underlying distal risk factors that influence critical levels of biological risk to account for these differences are not well understood. Using secondary data from the 2003-2006 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, the article examines the association between social status, socioeconomic status & seven biological markers of CVD risk. The seven biological markers are High Density Lipoprotein, Low Density Lipoprotein, C-Reactive Protein, Homocysteine, Blood Pressure, waist circumference and triglycerides. Results show a significant pattern of association between educational level & biomarkers that varied by race/ethnicity. When a cumulative risk score was applied against risk factors for CVD, lower educational attainment was associated with higher cumulative risk. Results of the paper shows that socio-economic status is a significant predictor of metabolic risks in adulthood & assessing education's relationship to biomarkers appropriate for assessing cardiovascular risks that vary by race/ethnicity & age group is important for understanding disparities in health.

2010S00664

Dix, Steffen (Steffen Dix; Institute of Social Science; University of Lisbon [e-mail: sdix@ics.ul.pt]), **Beyond the Dual Perspective of Being Either Religious or Secular (Modern): Portuguese Catholicism as a Case Study**, *International Sociological Association, Gothenburg, Sweden*,

¶ Modernization is often associated with secularization. However, it has become clear over the last few years that modernisation doesn't cause a necessary decline of religion. Even in modern European societies, we have to acknowledge the simultaneous existence and the link between the religious & secular spheres. Based on the case study of Portuguese Catholicism, I endeavour to re-examine the dual perspective of being either religious or secular (modern). Bearing in mind that there has never been a linear transition from the religious to the secular in Portugal, it would be more accurate to say that traditional Catholicism has tried over the last decades to adapt to the conditions of increasing modernisation. In this sense, Portuguese Catholicism in the second half of the twentieth century